



Police fear pattern in beating of shoplifters

Shopkeepers accused of violence as incident in Chinatown turns 'ugly'

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STAFF REPORTER

Two of the three storekeepers accused of bundling a suspected shoplifter into a van and beating him on the weekend were involved in a similar incident in 2001, according to a Toronto police email.

The internal email mistakenly released to the media yesterday asks eight officers about whether to hold a media scrum to alert shopkeepers of their "rights when acting on their powers of arrest."

Saturday's incident became "ugly" when the accused – a Grange Ave. store manager and two of his employees – allegedly restrained a suspected thief, bound his hands and ankles and threw him into a van, where he was beaten, the email states.

Officers responding to a 911 call freed the man.

"The owner and his manager had a similar type incident back in 2001 where the end result was a peace bond," the police email states.

A peace bond is an undertaking to keep the peace and obey other specified terms of conditions and does not result in a criminal record.

When called for comment yesterday, police said they could not discuss the 2001 incident because no criminal records resulted.

According to the email, the weekend incident prompted several calls to police from "several business representatives from Chinatown," and Trinity-Spadina Councillor Adam Vaughan.

Vaughan could not be reached for comment yesterday.